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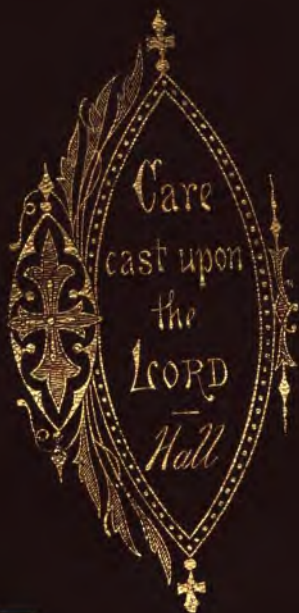
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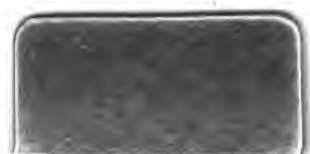
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CARE
CAST UPON THE LORD.

BY THE
REV. J. HALL, D.D.,
NEW YORK.

“Weep with those that weep.”

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TO THE

Great Company of the "CAREFUL AND TROUBLED," whose Faith is feeble, and whose Burdens are too heavy for them, this little book, by one who has tried and proved its plan, is dedicated, with sympathy and affection, and not without hope that through it the loving Saviour may say to some of them again, "Cast thy burden on the LORD."

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CARE CAST UPON THE LORD.



OUR CONDITION.

THERE are numerous and excellent works in circulation for the guidance of those whom the Divine Spirit has moved to ask the way of life. And when men have crossed the boundary-line between the kingdom of darkness and that of light by a conscious trust in Jesus, and have in love and thankfulness laid themselves out for becoming like their Saviour, they will find Christian authorship rich in works upon personal holiness and the means of its pursuit. So, too, for the mourners over the dead, collections have been made of promises and precepts such as may serve

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to cheer and direct under the pressure of great tribulation.

But there are conditions of Christian life not provided for by any of these valuable manuals—conditions where the way of peace is apprehended, and the way of holiness perceived clearly, where there is no special sorrow or bereavement that suggests and evokes human sympathy, and yet where there is great need of appropriate and discriminating Scriptural advice.

A man has a fair business that promises in time to give him a competence. He has also a home to maintain, a wife and children dependent on him. He finds himself committed in a hundred unavoidable ways to a certain expense, to meet which honestly is a constant problem. He cannot talk of this to his closest associates in business. It might be unwise to evince concern which the caution, or the ill will, or even the thoughtlessness of others might turn to his injury—for credit is sensitiv

in an uncommon degree. He cannot, in his very love, make even his wife the full partner of his anxieties. He would fain spare her. It is easy enough to say, "but he should tell her and retrench at once." The advice is most fluently given by those who never had to test it. He has done his utmost, and still the burden is there.

Here is a minister with a fixed income and a growing and an inevitable expenditure. *He* does not fix the scale upon which he shall live. The public sentiment of the place fixes it for him, and is inexorable in enforcing its own standard. He knows, as well as he knows the way to his church, that a certain style of living, in house, furniture, dress, servants, and so forth, is expected of him, and that to fall conspicuously below it will be at the sacrifice of that for which he was educated and ordained, for which he toils and prays, namely, influence for good and usefulness in God's service. He has—as thousands

of heroic men and self-denying, wise, brave women know—no common burden of care, and in many cases he is precluded from revealing to those who ought to know and should relieve, by delicacy of feeling, by the fear of misconstruction, and by a variety of influence of which the highest order of minds will be the most susceptible.

A widow, to whom easy comfort has been given till her sore bereavement, has to plan and arrange for her children. It is not a sordid, but a very just and noble feeling that impels her to secure, if possible, for her children that which habit has associated in her mind with culture, and the character she would have them form. But how much self-denial, forethought, and carefulness the task entails! No wonder that she so often grows prematurely old.

Nor are these the only claimants for our sympathy. Here is a young man filling a place in a business house, with a

modest salary. It is no impertinence in me, as I am situated to him, to hear how he manages with his money. In another land, a mother and younger children are doing their utmost to hold their ground, and be no less respectable than was the husband and father. He had undertaken to make a quarterly remittance to that mother, and for long years he had never failed.

"Yes, I did it," said he, "and it was pretty hard when things were dear and money was scarce."

Had he no care, think you, in those days? and thank God there are good and true young men everywhere, who do extra work, and deny themselves, to help on those whom they love. Shall we not recognise them as they bear their burden, and help them if we can?

And, appealing yet more to our tenderness, how many women are there, many of them young in years, but old in toil and cares, carrying alone the burden of

life, sometimes for themselves, and others too—for aged parents, and helpless younger ones; sometimes, alas! for worthless and vicious brothers and sisters who have long ago lost every claim on them but that of being nursed at the same bosom. The writer, as a minister, has seen as lofty illustrations of unselfishness, patient endurance and fortitude in these quiet sisters of mercy—Heaven-ordained—as can be found anywhere. They are often passed by lightly. People make dull jokes about their “old maid” lives, ignorant all the while of the sacrifices made to duty and high Christian principles. Surely for these and such as these, voluntarily kept down, and willing servants for the sake of others, there must be some special joys and higher honours in heaven, which, when their life is seen in the light of a purer world, will be cheerfully accorded them by all the multitude who travelled life’s uphill roads to the celestial city.

It were worth while to make a book, if it carried but a cup of cold water even to one such soul with rich capacity for sympathy, with unappeased hunger for human love—which yet must wait until He call in whose presence is fulness of joy, and at whose right hand are pleasures for evermore.

Even outside the classes of which types have passed before us, how many are there at all times even in this free and prosperous America, who among the changes and fluctuations of life are made to taste the bitterness of care ?

“ Not always, Lord, in pastures green,
Thy sheep at noon thou feedest,
Where in the shade they lie
Under thy watchful eye :
Not always under skies serene
The white-fleeced flock thou leadest.

“ On rugged ways, with bleeding feet,
They leave their painful traces ;
Through deserts drear they go,
Where wounding briers grow,
And through dark valleys where they meet
No quiet resting places.”

Many a hopeful heart is filled with forebodings, and many a kindly face is clouded as it turns on sons and daughters for whom manly toil has hitherto provided. What is to come of these? Must they want, or owe to charity the means of life? Questions like these crush many a spirit at this moment. That were a heartless religion that ignored, and an incomplete religion that made no provision for, these anxieties. But the religion of Jesus Christ is neither heartless nor defective. He who preached the "Sermon on the Mount" knew what is in man. It is not a new lesson, but an honest application of the old, that we require to save us from the pressure of undue anxiety. Dear reader, whatever the source of *your* anxiety, the Lord is capable of dealing with it, if you are only willing to carry it to Him.

And as the birds' nests that the green leaves covered in summer, are disclosed among the naked boughs when summer

has flown, so it is in the winter of men's adversity we see their refuges. At such a time some fall back on harder toil; some count up the possessions still left them; some, alas! turn to stupefying pleasures; and some lay plans, and count the chances of the future. Each has his shrine, his retreat, and by his refuge you may know his character.

Now, the wise man falls back upon God, and says of the Almighty, "He is my refuge and my fortress; my God, in Him will I trust."

I weep, but not rebellious tears;
I mourn, but not in hopeless woe;
I droop, but not with doubtful fears;
For whom I've trusted, Him I know.
"Lord, I believe, assuage my grief,
And help—oh! help my unbelief!"

As link by link was rent away,
My heart wept blood, so sharp the pain;
But I have lived to count this day
That temporal loss eternal gain;
For all that once detained me here
Now draws me to a holier sphere.

C. B. SOUTHEY.

OUR DANGER.

THAT over-carefulness is an evil in itself, we may fairly conclude from the manner in which our Lord speaks of it. Again and again He tells His disciples, in Matt. vi., "Take no thought"—not that He means to counsel indifference or recklessness, but to guard against undue anxieties. Two sources of uneasiness He specified. The one respects present physical wants—"what may we eat? what can we drink? what can we put on?" For, correctly rendered, the questions are not those of rich persons choosing among competing luxuries, but of destitute persons in quest of necessities.* The other respects apprehensions about to-morrow added to the needful

* "The future, as in v. 25, is not the form of the original, which more exactly means *what may (or can) we eat?* but may be rendered as before—*what are we to eat, or drink, or wear?*"—(Dr ALEXANDER on the passage.)

cares of to-day. "Be not over-solicitous about to-morrow, but allow one day's care to be enough for one day. The morrow when it comes will bring its own troubles with it." The very form in which our Divine Master brings forward this merciful and considerate advice is instructive. He had told men that they could not serve God and mammon. "But," natural prudence suggests, "we *must* provide for bodily wants." "Yes," the Lord seems to reply, "but if you be the Lord's servants, He will see to your wants. He provides for the chattering sparrow that has no foresight, and the brilliant lily that graces the field for a day. Only decide to be His servants, and He will much more provide for you, that are much better than they." "But," some child of care interposes, "when is anxiety undue? I cannot shake it off. My life is, for the most part, a struggle, and in dull bad times, when no business is done, and no money

is made to meet constant wants, I *must* be concerned. When am I over-careful?"

Dear reader, do not think that a heartless rebuke is being given you by one who never knew care. I know you must be concerned, but your concern becomes undue—

1. *When your devotion is hindered by it*; when it prevents your worshipping God at home or abroad; when worldly thoughts intrude themselves on the Lord's day, and in His house, and push aside Sabbath feeling.

2. Or, *when it hinders your enjoyment of what you actually possess*; when your mind is so running on what you have not as to forget to be grateful for what you have; when the drawbacks to your enjoyment are dwelt upon to the exclusion of your actual blessings; when all your possessions are nothing because you cannot have a garden of herbs; and all your

honours nothing, because somebody in the gate is rude to you; then be sure you are over-careful.

3. Or, *when your anxiety suggests sinful plans.* When Sarah gave her maid to her lord; when Rebekah and Jacob imposed upon Isaac; when the Lord is not trusted to do what is good in the right way and the right time; then the sin of over-carefulness is unquestionably committed. Indeed, it might be said, in one word, that any cares that we cannot cast upon the Lord are sinful cares; and the longer we lie under them, the more injury we must receive, the more we grieve the Spirit, and dishonour God. For only consider—that must be a bad thing against which a loving Saviour warns disciples so earnestly. That anxiety of mind silvers the hair and furrows the brow; that it dries up the springs of human gladness, and ages the man of whom it lays hold; that many a face once joyous as the light, is by it “sick-
B

lied o'er with the pale cast of thought ;' that bodily toil or pain is tolerable compared with it—these are general truths which may be admitted without any clear apprehensions of the precise evil of over-carefulness.

But we should be able to see that there are distinct, positive mischiefs traceable to this over-anxiety, to be forewarned of which is to be forearmed.

Does it not diminish human happiness? But the works of God's hands and the words of His mouth show His wish that His creatures should be happy. Food might have sustained us without having been sweet to the taste, and the earth might have brought it forth without being robed in loveliness. Birds might have been without music, and flowers without beauty of colour, or sweetness of perfume. A thousand things in nature have for their end the enjoyment of the creature ; and the God of nature is the God of the

Bible, in which "joy," and "joyful," and "be glad," are words of frequent recurrence. How often He bids men rejoice ! How varied the sources of joy He provides—in His statutes, His providence, His salvation, His Son, Himself ! Now He must be opposed to anything that diminishes this enjoyment, as does undue solicitude ; and so He says, "Be careful for nothing" (Phil. iv. 6). "Take thought for nothing" (the same word as in the Sermon on the Mount). You may not believe it, dear reader—you who possibly think that people turn to religion when their minds are soured or unfit to enjoy life ; but it is, nevertheless, as true as anything else in the Word, that God wishes His creatures to be happy ; and happy they would be if they only took His way, and walked after His truth.

Over-carefulness shows distrust of God.
—But He wishes us to trust Him, as did the sailor, who said, when reminded of

the dangers of the deep, and the risk of being swallowed up if the ship were wrecked, "I should but fall into my Father's hand, for He holds the sea in the hollow of it." To be oppressed with care is a plain doubting of God's power or willingness to undertake for us. It is practically to say, "I have all this on myself, and I may not be equal to it." Why, the Lord is willing to take it off you, if you will only let Him.

It unfits us for cheerfully serving God.
—How can a man serve heartily who is burdened with cares? He can do but half his duty, or do it with half his powers. I have seen persons so overwhelmed with anxiety about spiritual things, as to be unfit for worldly duty; but I must say, I have far more frequently seen worldly care disqualify for spiritual service. A man must be at rest about his soul, at leisure from himself, in order to look

singly to the Lord, and be hearty and unrestrained in His service. I overlook not the fact that the Lord in His providence lays a burden of care on some, such as the widow, with the work of two on her feeble hands, or the elder children of orphaned families, and uses it for their sanctification, as he does any other affliction. But here the very bearing of the burden aright is the service God enjoins; and He makes it even pleasant to bear. On the wilderness of such a life-journey manna falls from heaven, and in its desert streams gush from flinty rocks.

“ We need not bid, for cloister'd cell,
Our neighbours and the world farewell,
Nor strive to wind ourselves too high,
For sinful man beneath the sky.

“ The trivial round, the common task,
Would furnish all we ought to ask—
Room to deny ourselves, a road
To bring us daily nearer God.”

Over-carefulness banishes spiritual thoughts.—So “the cares of this life choke the word.” With a great pressure on the mind, we cannot entertain serious things, and we justify the neglect of them as a necessity to which we must submit. Many a man has extended his business unduly, and paid the penalty of his success, in a pre-occupation of mind so great as to shut out God, and leave his soul barren and cheerless.

Are these not actual and serious dangers? To pass through a joyless existence—to proclaim distrust of God—to have no heart to serve Him—these are surely conditions that would render our life a wretched failure. Is there any escape from perils so fearful?

How shall we speak to Thee, O Lord,
Or how in silence lie?
Look on us, and we are abhorred,
Turn from us, and we die.

Thy guardian fire, Thy guiding cloud,
Still let them gild our wall,
Nor be our foes and Thine allowed
To see us faint and fall.

Lord, wave again Thy chastening rod
Till every idol throne
Crumble to dust, and Thou, O God,
Reign in our hearts alone.

KEBLE.

OUR PLACE OF SAFETY.

IN the Book of Proverbs it is written (ch. xviii. 10), "The name of the Lord is a strong tower, the righteous runneth into it and is safe." Stripped of figure, the meaning of Solomon's quaint words is, that God's revealed character and attributes form a stay and a support to a good man in a time of distress. Suppose God were ignorant—we might suffer on without attracting his notice. But "your heavenly Father knoweth you have need." Suppose him weak—we might endure without help from him. There might be a load on us too heavy for Him to lift, or hurricane around us too tempestuous for Him to quell. But He is the "Almighty." "Power belongeth unto God." Suppose him removed from us, in some distant region of the universe which our cry could not reach nor our groans penetrate—we might well despair. But "He is not far from every

one of us," "Thou art near, O God!"—nearer to each of us than our souls are to our bodies. Suppose Him without pity, goodness, or grace—the deep waters might go over our souls, and there would be none to cry unto, none to help. But, behold! He is "the Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long suffering, and slow to wrath." Suppose him implacable, good to the just, but inexorable to the wrong-doer—we should have no hold on Him. But "He pardoneth iniquity." "God is in Christ reconciling sinners unto Himself." Let Him only be known to us in this character, and with these attributes, and we have a hiding-place and store-house in the day of alarm and destitution. "The Lord is good: a stronghold in the day of trouble."

"Rest thou in God, amid all changes

Be pleased with all He may ordain;

Wait patient till what He arranges

For thy best welfare shall be plain.

God who has chosen us as His,

Knows best what our true welfare is."

The name of the Lord is a strong tower *with many sides*. Persons sometimes look at one side, and think that is the whole of it; and others look at another side, and think they have the exclusive view of it. This good man looks at the side called "Goodness," and deplores the mistake of his brother, who sees a side called "Severity," and who, in turn, finds fault with his censor, and doubts if he ever saw the tower in his life. But, many-sided as it is, there is an entrance on every side which opens to one name, and to "none other under heaven, or given among men." But it *does* open to that dear name. Take one side for illustration—let it be Justice, which may be supposed the least accessible to a sinner. "He will by no means clear the guilty," is an inscription that may well frighten off an approaching transgressor. Out of Christ, Divine Justice gives me no comfort. It is no relief to me to hear of the cherub's sword flashing across the

path to Paradise lost; of the waters of an avenging tide rolling over the charred and blackened cities of the plain; of Judas "going to his own place." Let me, without Christ's name on my lips, without Christ's person and work—for they go together—in my eye; without Christ's word in my hand and heart, let me, my naked self—or, if you will, with the best fig-leaves I and mine can gather around me—approach *that* side, and awful pictures of avenging power appal me! Nor is it any relief to tell me, "these things are all right." I know they are. My conscience tells me so; but it tells me also, that I am all wrong; and so I fear and quake exceedingly. As Luther was wont to say, "I cannot come near the absolute God." But I go with Christ's name on my lips, Christ's person and work (I will not separate them,) in my eye, Christ's word in my hand and heart, and, sinner as I am, I see a door and a shelter for me now, even on this

side. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful *and just* to forgive us our sins." Yes, for He whose name I bear, and in whom I appear, met the Lord's holy demands with perfect satisfaction, and coming through Him I shall not be cast out.

More evidently still, goodness, mercy, grace, are on the sinner's side, when he comes by the new and living way. Further explanation of this point, therefore, is unnecessary. But, O reader, if you are out of Christ, what will you do? A believer casts all on his God and Saviour. What will you do? Will you bear your cares alone? and your sins, alone? and your sorrows, alone? and death and judgment, alone? Do not attempt it, I beseech you. Carry the sin to God through Christ. He will receive you, forgive you, and in the hour when you come, will save you. The Lord will draw you to Himself for Jesus' sake!

Does it seem to you who trust that you

are pardoned, as if this were really too much; as if it would be extravagant to suppose that the Lord would become your caretaker in everything? If so, let me deal with this apprehension, and appeal to your judgment. Let us look at the grounds on which we cherish such a conviction, in our next chapter.

STILL WITH THEE.

Still with thee, O my God,
I would desire to be,
By day, by night, at home, abroad,
I would be still with Thee.

With Thee when dawn comes in
And calls me back to care,
Each day returning, to begin
With Thee, my God, in prayer.

With Thee amid the crowd
That throngs the busy mart,
To hear Thy voice, where time is loud,
Speak softly to my heart.

With Thee when day is done,
And evening calms the mind,

CARE CAST UPON THE LORD.

The setting and the rising sun
With Thee my heart would find.

With Thee when darkness brings
The signal of repose,
Calm in the shadow of Thy wings
Mine eyelids I would close.

With Thee, in Thee by faith
Abiding I would be
By day, by night ; in life, in death,
I would be still with thee.

REV. J. D. BURNS.

OUR ENCOURAGEMENTS.

GOD declares that He *careth* for us. To prepare your minds to realise this, you must consider *what God is*, and you may find it easiest to get some adequate notion from creation. These globes round about you—inaccessible to men, with an impassable gulf between earth and them over which none can stretch across to act on them—must have been reached and acted on by Him. Wherever He can act, *He is*; therefore, He is omnipresent; and if so, clearly He must be omniscient; for if He be everywhere, He knows all things. It is not difficult to think of a Being of this kind superintending His works. But we are His works, and He teaches us to think so and say so. “We are the work of His hands.” Relatively, we may be insignificant—as nothing in comparison with suns and systems, but still we are His works; and He cares for them all, great and little.

—for the lion roaring in the forest, and the innumerable creeping things down on the floor of the sea ; for the flower in the field growing among the cornstalks, and the king on his throne in all his glory. It is not said in Scripture, but it is a fair inference from it, that the Lord hateth nothing He hath made. When it is said, “Jacob have I loved, and Esau have I hated,” other elements come into the case, and the Lord speaks of His sovereign dealings with sinful men.* And if there be losses and privations, and seeming neglect of His creatures ; if adverse winds, for example, sink our ships, or storms beat

* “Hated,” *i.e.*, in comparison with my love for Jacob, loved less. This usage is not unknown to Scripture. “If a man come to Me, and hate not his father and mother” (Luke xiv. 26) ; not surely “hate” absolutely, but *love less* than Me, for our Lord everywhere asserts the claims of parents to our gratitude and affection. But He must have a yet higher place than they in our regards.

down our crops, or sickness rage, sin has *disturbed* the state of things, and rendered discipline and punishment needful, the former of which is itself a proof of care. He takes an interest in all His works, and it is reasonable to think this interest is proportioned to the serviceableness of these works. He made man the crown of His works, gave him dominion, put reason within him, gave him a living soul and a high destiny; and it is melancholy indeed to see men fight against their Creator, to see the young and vigorous reduce to wreck and unsightly wretchedness the bodies, and to ruin and beastly stupidity the minds God gave them, as we have many a time seen them do. When we see a parent lavish love and care on a child, and the child grow up to slight and despise this care,—to be everything his parents would wish him not to be, to thwart their will, and oppose their wishes for his good,—we find it hard to keep

down our indignation. We pity the parent, and are angry with the perverse and wayward child. And our Maker lavished skill, wisdom, and goodness in making us. Shall we go to work as if we thought it a noble thing to undo His handiwork? Rather let us feel that we are God's workmanship, made for high purposes, and that on this ground He cares for us.

But then the Lord is not only the Maker, but the Manager of this complicated machine. He is upholding all things. He is feeding all from His open hand, watering with the river God, watching all with His sleepless eye. Nor is the world a collection of separate and distinct units, each of which, like the rounded pebbles on the seaside, is independent of the other; but is rather like our bodies, where every member is connected with the other by mutual sympathy and mutual dependence. So, when cruel war ravaged

America, Lancashire hands were idle ; and so, when vegetables rotted in the soil, a nation was decimated by famine and disease, and the prince-merchants were bankrupt. We are all parts of this great machine which the Lord regulates, and links in a great chain, depending and supporting others dependent upon us. To keep the whole safe, every part must be safe. So the Lord cares for us, watches over us, and over all the most insignificant of His creatures. And the things that happen to us, and which we say came by chance (which is only another name for our ignorance of the immediate cause), are sure to have a bearing upon us or upon others. To cut the thread of a child's life, for example, and take the little form away that was so full of promise, may be the very means of turning the affections of parents into a new channel, as well as save the child from inevitable trouble. To waste the property of a family may be

to preserve its sons from temptation, or to develop energies that would otherwise lie dormant, or be exercised in sin. The rains that sink into the soil and appear useless, come out as springs somewhere else; the water that dries off the earth, comes down in rain somewhere; and the winds that dash the boughs against each other, loosen the soil to admit rain and air, and so strengthen the roots and enlarge the tree;—and thus providences that are unintelligible, and that seem contradictions to God's character, have a meaning and a bearing, which, if seen as they will be, instead of throwing doubt, would throw a glory around God's attributes.

“ And as when day forsakes the sky,
And earthly lights through vapours loom,
Star after star shines out on high,
The watch-lamps of the hours of gloom ;
So still, as darker grows the hour,
The brighter shines the holy word,
And stars of promise hid before,
Their blessed light to me afford.”

It is for greater good that Hannah loses the society of her little son, and that Jacob loses Joseph; and if it be said that the arrangement inflicted on him the pain of separation, it may be replied, it was salutary discipline, or it was well merited retribution, for Jacob had not been everything as a son that he ought to have been. Let us settle this, then, that God cares for us as a part of a great whole which He rules and guides, and with the good management of which He has connected His own glory. Not only the good that befalls us but the evil, and not only the evil from God's hand but from man's, is under God's providential government. Joseph's brethren meant evil, but "God sent" Joseph into Egypt. Saul took a sword and fell on it, yet the Lord so punished Saul for his transgression. The Assyrian invaded Israel through pride and lust of conquest, sinned therein, and was punished for it, and yet the Lord is said to have sent him.

And finally, the Jews conspired *against* Christ, sinned, and were punished for the sin; and yet the early disciples believed, and said in prayer, that the chief priests and rulers had done what His "hand and counsel had before determined to be done." So that not only all *good* from God's hand, but all trying arrangements, and not only so, but all *evil* from man's hand,—and may we not say from devils, too?—is part of God's providential government, yet so that the sin is not His, but the sinner's. Be sure, then, that the Lord cares for you. because of the place you fill in that great system of which He is the All-wise upholder and providential manager.

But you believe, and are His people. Well, He has in His people a still deeper interest. A word sufficed to *create* us, and the exercise of the same *creative will* is required to maintain our being; but it required more than this to save us. To create us anew required the incarnation,

the mysterious sufferings and real death of the Lord Jesus, the Son of Man. God's spoken word had but to go forth, and we came into being; but His incarnate Word has to go forth, suffer, and die, in order to our spiritual life. The portion that Jacob took from the Amorite with his sword and bow was the portion he prized, and that he gave to his favourite Joseph. And we are "the portion" the Lord takes out of the hand of his enemy and ours, and He cares for us as such. A love that is everlasting, a care that is likened to that which guards the pupil of his eye, a fidelity of attachment to which the mother's love provides no parallel,—these have been expended on us, and are still in operation toward us. Can it be doubted, then, that He cares for us?

Well sung Gustavus Adolphus before the battle of Lützen, in which, though he fell early, the impulse given by his courage carried the brave Swedes to signal victory—

“The cause is God’s—then cease to grieve ;
With Him who claims it, vengeance leave,
Look up to Him as reigning ;
He through his Gideon whom He knows
Will succour thee and smite thy foes,
Thee and His word maintaining.

“As God is God, His truth must stand ;
The devil and the world may band,
But woe to their alliance.
They shall beneath our feet be trod,
God is with us, and we with God ;
We bid them all defiance.”

Every attribute of His is committed to our safety.

Let us perish and his *power* is put in question. Moses urged this before the Lord : “ If Thou shalt kill all this people, the nations will speak, saying, Because the Lord was not able to bring this people unto the land which He swore unto them, therefore He hath slain them in the wilderness ” (Numbers xiv. 15, 16). So, if we be not saved, it will appear as if His power failed.

His *love* is committed to our maintenance. He proclaims Himself unchangeable. Let us perish and it will seem as though He were fickle and vacillating.

His *faithfulness* is on our side. He hath sworn unto His Son, the seed of David. He hath entered into covenant, and shall He go back, and fail to make good what He hath said? God's attributes are thus involved with us, so to speak. By how much they are glorified in our deliverance, by so much would they be dishonoured, if we perished. How then can He fail to care for us as His redeemed people, bought with His Son's blood, and having His own name named upon us?

"BY A WAY THOU KNOWEST NOT."

My pleasant path in sudden darkness ended,
 My footsteps slipped, my hopes were well-nigh gone;
 I could but pray, and as my prayers ascended,
 Thy face, O Father, through the darkness shone.

And by that light I saw the cross of trial,
The landmark of the way my Saviour went,
The upward path of pain and self-denial,
And Thou didst point me to the steep ascent—

A way I knew not, winding, rough, and thorny,
So dark at times that I no path might see ;
But Thou hast been my guide through all the
journey,
Its steepness has but made me lean on Thee,

And onward still I go in calm assurance,
That Thou wilt needful help and guidance
lend,
That strength will come for every day's endurance,
Grace all the way, and glory at the end.

J. D. BURNS.

NECESSARY LIMITATIONS.

I CAN conceive an objection to this plan of casting all care on the Lord shaped in such a fashion as this: "Why, a man has only to set his heart on what he will, and then go to the Lord with it, and count upon getting his desires satisfied. He may take his own way, do as he will, and if painful results follow, refer them to the Lord and get rid of them."

This is to pervert the right ways of the Lord. It is a part of that folly which men betray when they wilfully commit sin, intending at some future time to be sorry for it—surely one of the most transparent devices of the devil! No, my dear reader, you must deal fairly with God's word. To interpret a kindly promise from a man in this way would not be to act in good faith. It is not faith but presumption, that reasons as above upon the promise of God. When it is said that by the unction from

the Holy One, Christians know "all things," and that the Comforter shall lead into all truth, plainly we are to understand—not all scientific and philosophic truth, but all the truth in His department, or in His province. Saints are taught all things with which the Spirit has properly to do.

And so all our cares are to be cast upon the Lord—all with which He has properly to do. This excludes all our lusts. Ahab, fretting on his bed for Naboth's vineyard, has no right here. Haman, gnawing his tongue in pain because one man's homage is withheld from him, has no room in this privileged spot. All cares after unlawful things, all inordinate cares about lawful things, are outside of it. The Lord will have nothing to do with the world's Trinity—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life. There are cares, too, that spring directly out of sin, which a man must be content to bear alone, if I

may so say. Even though he be saved, and his sin forgiven, David cannot wonder if the fruits of it start up when not looked for, to humble him and vindicate God. A guilty connection formed—health wasted and destroyed in indulgence—property squandered in prodigality—position lost through criminality, and such like iniquities may be forgiven (and it is much that the guilt of them is remitted), but the Lord will not reverse the course of His government, to undo the effects of their transgressions. The most that can well be expected in such cases is, that the forgiven transgressor should “go softly,” thankful for the forgiveness, and waiting for the time when even the scars of the wounds received among the Philistines shall be effaced for ever.

When we enter the Lord’s service He guarantees our safety therein, but not in our temporary desertion of Him. He points out the way to heaven, and keeps

us therein ; but if we wander from the way to please ourselves, we do it at our peril. We are safe, however, all storms and dangers notwithstanding, if He be with us. His "peace, be still" gives us quietness evermore.

WHEN first the Saviour wakened me,
And show'd me why He died,
He pointed o'er life's narrow sea
And said, "to yonder side."

Peaceful and calm the tide of life,
When first I sail'd with Thee,
My sins forgiven, no inward strife—
My breast a glassy sea.

But soon the storm of passion raves,
My soul is tempest toss'd—
Corruptions rise like angry waves,
"Help, Master ! I am lost !"


"Peace, peace, be still thou raging breast,
My fulness is for thee,"
The Saviour speaks, and all is rest
Like the waves of Galilee.

And now I feel His holy eye,
Uphraids my heart of pride,
"Why raise the unbelieving cry?
I said, to yonder side."

R. M. M'CHEYNE.

OUR PRIVILEGE.

THE exceptions of the foregoing chapter having been fairly admitted, the great, the blessed advantage remains to us of casting all our care upon the Lord. Now, then, dear reader, see how this suits you, with precise reference to worldly cares and anxieties. Let us traverse the path to this refuge; we cannot know it too well. If we do not need it just now, our Father only knows how soon we may. We are apt to imagine that God is only to interpose on some great occasion. Horace, in giving directions to play-writers, says, "Let not a god interfere unless there be a knot worthy of a god's unravelling." This was good for a heathen in a play; but it is not good for a Christian in his life. *There is nothing concerning us* too small for the Lord. Parents! what that affects your child is beneath your notice? And have you not sung



“Such pity as a father hath
Unto his children dear,
Like pity shows the Lord to such
As worship Him in fear.”

So take all your cares to Him. The Lord made coats of skin for Adam and Eve. He sent the raven with food to Elijah. He heard Eleazar's prayer about a wife for Isaac. He marked the unspoken anguish of Hannah, and gave her Samuel. We are not only to cry to God in the great crisis of our history, but in all our history. The great crisis may never come. *We* may never see a fiery furnace crackling beside a huge idol, with the alternative forced on us of the one or the other. No lion's den may ever yawn for us. But we have our *daily burden* of cares, sorrow, suspense, anxiety; let us cast all of it on the Lord. Let us make Him our caretaker and tell all to Him in prayer. That in itself does us good. To unbosom one's-self to wife, or husband, or friend, is good. Still better

to "tell the Lord our griefs." He can give sympathy and help, not perhaps by turning the winds that blow adversely to us, but by teaching us so to shift the sails, that we shall make progress notwithstanding.

Are you troubled, then, *about yourself*? You are in feeble health; maybe unable to work; may have the will and power, but not the opportunity to toil? Or is there any other care ending with yourself, and pressing on you, of any kind? For I need not say that some of our sorest troubles are not written in the books, or preached upon specifically in sermons. Stay now and consider, dear reader, are you a believer in Christ? No; you fear not.

No? Then what folly to trouble yourself about this life, when the greater future is unprovided for? As if a drowning fisherman, sinking in the tide, should be concerned about his lines and bait, and


forget his life? Go, I beseech you, to the Lamb of God. He has life to bestow. This very care may be the means to bring you to Him. Get life from Him; see then if the world does not assume a different aspect. Oh! do not repeat the folly that Cæsar Borgia is said to have bewailed: "I have provided in the course of my life for everything except death, and now, alas! I am to die, though unprepared." Rather imitate Andrew Fuller, who said: "I have such a hope, that with it I can plunge into eternity." This is to be had from God, in Christ, and nowhere else! Do not speak of minor cares, with eternity unprovided for.

But you have gone to the Lord and got this hope. "He drew you, and you followed on." You "know Him, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom He hath sent." Then go and speak in the ear of God these troubles and apprehensions that torment you. It may even do you good

to write them down in order, expressing them in distinct and unexaggerated language. We often allow a confused sense of disquiet to afflict us, when to examine, analyse, and arrange, would reduce the apparent bulk of our burdens. Then as relief comes from prayer, and from providence, if you will check off in order your late tormentors, you will find the catalogue diminished sooner than you expected. Some were no better than fears. "Ills that never happened have mostly made men wretched." Mothers and sisters, how often and how vainly you trembled for the future ! It was the old experience of Mary and the rest at their Lord's tomb, of which Mark tells us (ch. xvi. 3, 4) :

"And they said among themselves, who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre ?

"And when they looked they saw that the stone was rolled away, for it was very great."



Having subtracted all the mere fears, and considered if you be using all becoming diligence and proper prudence in your way of life, roll the whole of what remains upon the Lord. I am not merely saying to you, "make your mind easy," to bid you laugh, or weep, or be at ease, without assigning reasons for joy, or sorrow, or peace, and to expect compliance would be to trifle with you. The Lord gives us reasons for our intelligence to grasp, and our faith to rest upon. Has He any coldness towards you? He gave His Son for you. Are His resources limited? Do not treat Him as if they were. Rely on Him and honour His character. "A man carrying a burden," says a quaint writer, "was overtaken by a gentleman and invited to get up behind him in the carriage, which he thankfully did. After a while the gentleman looked round, and saw the burden still strapped to the traveller's back. He therefore asked him why he did not lay

down his pack on the seat beside him. But he answered, 'He could not think of doing that; it was quite enough that he himself should sit behind the carriage without putting his burden on the seat also.'" Thus do believers often fear to lay too much upon the God who has bidden us cast all our cares upon Him, and assured us that He careth for us.

But, perhaps, mere physical wants do not trouble you. You are anxious about your "position," social, commercial, or professional; for this somewhat indefinite thing "position," which often makes life hollow and artificial, is a fruitful source of cares. Are you estimating your position rightly? Are your ideas of what is due to it just? Are you over-estimating your responsibility? Remember no wise and candid person can ever expect you to do more than is permitted with the means at your disposal. A little courage would save many of us much perplexity. Why cannot

we dare to appear exactly what we are? Why cannot we do exactly what would be right for us to do, if there were no such thing as society?

But having settled these questions, you may trust the Lord with the rest. He took care of Joseph, of Daniel, of "the three Methodists in Babylon"—as John Foster calls the Hebrew confessors of the plain Dura—when their position was critical in the extreme. Look to Him and do right, and He will take care of yours too. He knows all your surroundings, and is equal to every emergency—a sun that never sets, a shield that never breaks. When the man of business shows his friend the bill coming due, and says, "I cannot take this up," and when his friend says, "Never mind, I'll take care of it for you," he will feel at ease as far as he believes in the resources and good-will of his friend. And what doubt lingers in your mind, dear reader, as to the power and will of your

heavenly Father? Does He not provide for meaner and commoner things? Do not flowers and birds, lilies and sparrows share His tendance? Does He not know all about you? He knew your spiritual wants, and gave Christ for their supply. With Him will He not freely give you all things? You have Christ. Then, "with Him," you get all. Without Him men may get honours, riches, and troops of friends, but not "all things." But "with Him!" Never forget, dear reader, that is the basis of your hope—the ground of your claim. WITH HIM you get freely "all things." He took *you* up. He will take up all your lawful burdens too. Having Christ with you, you can no more sink than Peter could go down beside Christ, with the cry on his lips, "Lord, save me!"

Be careful above all that you obtain spiritual good from the light of affliction. Try to say with the Rev. J. D. Burns, of London, poet and preacher, whose life was

from delicacy of health like slow dying, and yet most beautiful withal—some of whose verses I reproduce here with pleasure :

“ I know that trial works for ends
Too high for sense to trace ;
That oft in dark attire He sends
Some embassy of grace.

“ May none depart till I have gained
The blessing which it bears,
And learn, though late, I entertain’d
An angel unawares.

“ So shall I bless the hour that sent
The mercy of the rod,
And build an altar by the tent
Where I have met with God.”

As a man of business you may be anxious about your affairs. There are so many fluctuations, losses, and uncertainties that you sometimes despair. You are hoping that at such a date there will be no more difficulty, and wishing it were come ; but it does come, and there is

some new difficulty. Well, cast this care on God. Do not relax your effort, but try to make it in the Lord's strength. He will give what is good. The cord that seems to hold down and fetter the kite is the only thing that keeps it steady, and aloft.

But, perhaps the care is about wife or children, brothers or sisters, or others dependent upon you. There are thousands who could say in their sore distress, "I do not care for myself, but to see these!" Dear reader, it is well to bear this burden. What is it but being in so far conformed to Christ? Count this a part of your duty imposed by God, and look up to Him for grace to hold on your path; ay, though there be a return of unworthiness and ingratitude, and though much fruitless effort be made in vain. Did not the Lord make Joseph the means of saving from famine the whole heartless household, and of bringing them to right feeling also?


Do not let your spirit grow hard or restive under the burden laid on it. Do not say the word Satan would put into your lips, "Under what obligation am I to bear all this?" Think, oh! think, how Christ "came not to be ministered unto, but to minister." Do not let care shrivel up your heart, or draw you away from those whom God hath joined to you. Rather let it draw you, drive you to Him, and the burden His most holy, wise, and powerful providence imposes, His grace will help you to carry with comfort, while His Spirit will make gladsome music in your soul as you near the land where service is without weariness, and life without care.

You are a parent; you have many an anxiety about your children—their bread, their education, their steadiness, and their getting on in life. Commit them to God and ask that He may provide. Use all diligence in His strength. He will bring

them through. He gave them to you, and allowed you to give them back to Him. Seek first the kingdom, and all other things will be added.

You have troubles from your relation to others with whom you are connected. Well, ask God for good sense, good temper, and patience, and trust Him to make all right. He kept Joseph right in most difficult circumstances, and gave him the confidence of all. Go for help to Joseph's God. He will aid you, and bless you, and make all well for you. Whatever comes from God may be carried to Him; and whatever is entrusted to Him He will manage. So, child of God! believe His word, and fear not. "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?"

You cannot do all you would wish to do. No matter. The Lord requireth of us according to that we have, and not



according to that we have not. When the Queen of England visited Hull, the children of the workhouse had their place in the procession that did her honour, and and their little banner waved among the rest with the inscription, "Poor, but loyal." You, children of the heavenly King, "poor, but loyal," confide in your father. Look up. All things are yours, in the Covenant, in the promises, and in the providences too, though "for a while" they seem, as they did to Jacob, to be all against you.

"Suffering keeps the thoughts compacted,
That the soul be not distracted
By the world's beguiling art ;
'T is like some angelic warder,
Ever keeping sacred order
In the chambers of the heart."

The healing herbs and minerals are for the time of sickness ; the railway lamp, all unnoticed while you are whirled along in light, is for the gloomy tunnels ; the stars are for the night ; and many a blessed

promise in the Bible is put there for the troubled—is only legible when read through tears. Look up and listen. It is your Father who speaks. “Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness and hath no light?—let him trust in the name of his God.” Look up and listen? It is your brother “born for adversity” who says, “Let not your heart be troubled, ye believe in God, believe also in me.” Harken yet again. It is the Comforter who says, “The ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.”

“He hath done all things well !

Here rest, thou weary heart,
When prone to murmur or rebel,
Weak, weary as thou art.

“He hath done all things well !

The bitter and the sweet,

The light that cheer'd, the shade that fell
Are temper'd as is meet.

“He hath done all things well !
Things that seem strange and dim
Are working ends thou canst not tell
In clearest light to Him.”





